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no
Watch Committee conclusion--Middle East: (Situations susceptible of direct exploitation by Sino-Soviet bloc hostile action which would jeopardize US interests exist in the Middle East, particularly in Iran and Iraq. The situation in the area remains precarious, but a deliberate initiation of large-scale hostilities is unlikely in the immediate future.)

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Iraq: (The rapid progress of the Communists toward control of Iraq is continuing.)

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✓ Israel-Syria: (Special Watch Committee report on Israeli-Syrian recalls of reserves.)

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DAILY BRIEF

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Instability in the Sudan

Despite Premier Abboud's repeated assurances to the people that the Sudan's military government is stable and united, jockeying for power continues at the highest army levels, and the leaders of the suspended political parties are maneuvering to improve their positions.

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The governmental changes since early March and the death on 24 March of Ansar leader Sayyid al-Rahman al-Mahdi have resulted in a sharp decrease in the power and influence of the Ansar sect and its Umma party, the strongest pro-Western elements in the country. The demands of leaders of the neutralist National Unionist party (NUP) that they be included in the Abboud government have so far been refused, but the senior officers in the government may resort to an "alliance" with NUP political leaders against the junior officers' movement.

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Israeli-Syrian Recalls of Reserves

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(The USIB Watch Committee issued the following report after a special meeting held at 1730, 1 April 1959:)

(An Israeli mobilization, announced at 1900 GMT on 1 April, recalling "all" reserves to report for reserve duty was followed prior to 2100 GMT by a UAR order to personnel of the First (Syrian) Army to return from leave and to all reservists detailed to certain numbered formations to report to their units by the morning of 2 April. A later Israeli order ordered reserves of three units (probably brigades) to report by 1700, 2 April. By 2100, a spokesman of the Israeli Defense Forces described the call-up as a recall of certain reservists of only three reserve units for ordinary training and the Israeli finance minister, speaking for the prime minister in the Knesset, declared that the order was only a routine call for training and that no importance was to be attached to it. The Israeli Embassy in Washington has also characterized this action as "not unusual," observing that "the days of Suez are over.")

(No preliminary mobilization measures, such as requisitioning of motor vehicles or rail rolling stock, have been observed or reported in Israel. The strength and deployment of Israeli military forces are believed to be normal. Recent incidents along Israel's borders have been minor and have not been treated as serious by the Israeli press, and the only specific source of tension between Israel and the UAR recently publicized has been the Egyptian seizure of cargoes of Israeli-chartered ships. Israel is known, however, to be concerned over a rapprochement between Nasir and the US and possible UAR action against Qasim.)

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[REDACTED]

(The Syrian recall order appears to be a direct reaction, about 2 hours later, to the Israeli order. Possible explanations for the Israeli recall of reservists, based on limited evidence, include:)

(--as the most likely, a mobilization exercise testing the "codeword" open radio call-up, with the codewords indicating the unit and its location to the reservists involved. The Israeli fiscal year begins 1 April and funds may have just become available for such an exercise.

--a demonstration of readiness for action as a pressure tactic.

--a true reaction to information unknown to us of real or suspected impending changes in situations along its borders.

--as the least likely, an intention to recall reservists, under the guise of a training exercise, for possible military action.)

(Whatever the purpose of the Israeli mobilization, this action and the Syrian mobilization in apparent reaction can raise Israeli-UAR tensions. In the face of the Syrian call-up, Israel may now retain its recalled forces on ready status.) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Iranian-Turkish Military Talks Strengthen Ties

During recent discussions in Tehran between Iranian and Turkish military leaders, the chief of the Turkish General Staff, General Rustu Erdelhun, stated in response to an Iranian question that in time of war the Shah would "of course" become the commander in chief of Baghdad Pact forces. Any such decision, however, would require the approval of Britain and Pakistan.

The Shah, pleased with the outcome of the talks and impressed with Erdelhun's presentation, has ordered the chief of the Iranian General Staff to coordinate closely with Turkey on defense problems and on Baghdad Pact military organization. The Turks and Iranians also agreed that, to assure concerted action in an emergency, the Baghdad Pact Military Planning Organization should have a proper staff structure headed by an American officer. These issues probably will be raised formally during the July meeting of the Baghdad Pact Military Committee.

The Shah emphasized to Erdelhun his fear that Iran would be encircled by hostile powers now that Iraq is working with the Communists. Erdelhun, who is a highly competent officer and strong advocate of close Turkish-American military cooperation, attempted to calm the Shah by stressing that Turkey and Pakistan stand on Iran's flanks and that US power will deter aggression by the USSR.

In respect to the Shah's continuing dissatisfaction with the level of American military aid, General Erdelhun stressed that both Turkey and Iran must increase the literacy and technical competence of their service personnel before they can make effective use of modern weapons.

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